

THE FLORIDA SENATE
2016 SUMMARY OF LEGISLATION PASSED
Committee on Agriculture

CS/CS/HB 749 — Agriculture

by State Affairs Committee; Agriculture and Natural Resources Subcommittee; Representative Raburn and others (CS/CS/SB 1310 by Appropriations Committee; Agriculture Committee; and Senator Hutson)

Agricultural Lands Classification

The bill amends Florida’s “greenbelt law” to provide a de minimis valuation up to \$50 per acre for citrus lands that are being restored in accordance with a five-year agreement pursuant to the Citrus Health Response Program established by the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (FDACS).

Farm Vehicle Registration

The bill allows certain farm vehicles to move on state roads from the place of purchase to the purchaser’s property for a time period of three days after purchase provided the operator possesses the bill of sale.

Regulatory Authority over Commercial Feed and Feedstuff

The bill preempts to the FDACS the authority to regulate, inspect, sample, and analyze any commercial feed or feedstuff distributed in this state, and it includes enforcement authority.

Penalties for Violating Plant Pest Statutes

The bill establishes penalties specifically enforceable at the state level, including enhanced penalties under certain circumstances, for persons knowingly dealing in any manner with plant pests, or introducing or releasing plant pests in this state without a special permit from the Division of Plant Industry of the FDACS. It also gives the FDACS authority to seek reimbursement of reasonable costs and expenses incurred in its plant pest control or eradication programs.

Conservation Easements

The bill provides that a conservation easement agreement may allow the continuation of agricultural activities on an easement, including livestock grazing, if such activity is a current or historic use on the land. Such activities must be conducted in accordance with best management practices adopted by the FDACS. The bill does not restrict or diminish the authority contained in any previous conservation agreement to conduct forest management and livestock grazing on an easement.

If approved by the Governor, these provisions take effect July 1, 2016

Vote: Senate 37-0; House 115-0

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